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THE DUBLIN LITERARY GAZETTE,

OR

WEEKLY CHRONICLE OF CRITICISM, BELLES LETTRES, AND FINE ARTS.

No. I.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 1830.

Price 8d.

GENTLE READER—In the first number of a publication of a character so novel in Ireland, as a periodical devoted to the interests of Literature, and the pursuits of Science and the Arts, you will naturally look for some explanation of our views and expectations. It belongs then to the politeness of Editorship, that in making our *début* before you, in our present character, we deliver something in the way of prefatory address, and announce ourselves with somewhat more of ceremony than (with your good favor,) we shall deem necessary, when we become more intimately acquainted. We are aware that a notion prevails with some, which has doubtless been imported, with other coarse commodities, from the western continent, that a certain degree of ferocity is becoming in an Editor, and that in order to be “awful smart” we should captivate the public as we would take captive a highwayman, by a sudden and violent assault; but we hold differently, and deeming the calling of Editorship a gentle craft, ‘our way is to conjure you’, and we present ourselves accordingly, with a bow, to solicit the favour of your friendly attention.

Perhaps this ceremonial may be thought to belong rather to the *old school* of politeness, than to that which is now more fashionable; we are not ashamed to ‘own the soft impeachment’; and this may be a favourable opportunity for acknowledging that our affections naturally tend a little towards the olden time, a circumstance which would appear the less surprising, if instead of viewing us in association with this new, and it may be somewhat light-looking periodical, we were beheld in our proper studio, with spectacles on nose, poring over the huge and ancient tomes, from which we draw those lessons of experience and wisdom, which in lighter and more sparkling form it is our purpose, most amenable reader, to transmit to thee.

But though we are very far from being accounted “light characters” by those who know us, let it not for a moment be supposed that we are heavy fellows, because we are somewhat declined into the vale of years, and carry ourselves in general with the tranquil gravity of deportment which profound study commonly imparts. Let none suspect that our lucubrations, or at least those of our brilliant and mercurial contributors, shall lack of that airy sportiveness which is reasonably looked for in such a publication as that which we superintend, for the benefit and delectation of our readers.

For ourselves, we rather apprehend a contrary effect; and as the toughest bow, when bent, is that which shoots its arrow nearest to the clouds, we only fear that when we spring from the cushioned reading chair to our editorial throne, we may essay flights that shall leave dull earth somewhat too far behind. It may be well, however, to forewarn the public, and we desire especial notice to be taken of the

fact, that whensoever we appear particularly light and trifling, they may be sure there is something of more than ordinary strength and solidity at the bottom of it, for it is with mind as with matter, whereof the very hardest and purest description, (diamond,) does, as the sons of chymists tell, when subjected to unusual violence of concentrated heat, pass away in a vapour so subtle as to escape the severest scrutiny of mortal ken.

These little introductory compliments being passed, we shall now, if you please, proceed to more serious business. We published, and have circulated very widely, a prospectus, in which (for the sake of originality,) we uttered a great deal of truth, and therein will be found, in brief, the motives of our undertaking, and the leading objects of our plan. We stated among other things that—

“The want of a Journal exclusively devoted to the interests of Literature, and the lighter more amusing parts of Science and the Arts, has long been a reproach to the Capital of Ireland, and throws a damp over every effort to raise her to her natural rank in the publishing and literary world. In genius, talent and learning, Dublin yields to no Metropolis in Europe, of similar extent; but these, like the warriors who lived before Agamemnon, are consigned to silence and oblivion because they want a popular record.

“Men whose exertions have been already stamped with the seal of public approbation in the literature of Great Britain, have now united for the purpose of taking away this reproach from their native City.”

Now if any man deny all or any of the premises, and will do battle in the cause of his negative, let him throw down his glove on the matted floor of the College Library, and we engage that as soon as the mildness of the advancing season permits us to breathe the air of that magnificent and fireless repository of learning and antiquity, without danger to our chronic rheumatism, we shall take up his gauntlet, and decide the point with the most approved weapons of sound argument, without one thrust or parry of rhetorical artifice; and thereto we pledge our troth.

In the meanwhile, we rely upon the acceptance which so plain and important a statement is likely to receive, and if it be founded in fact, as we are prepared to prove by wager of battle, even to the shedding of the last drop of our ink in the dear encounter, then it contains within itself sufficient reason and apology for the attempt which we shall make “to take away the reproach from our native city.”

We trust that by a careful rejection of all matter tending to keep alive those disputes, which hitherto in this country have split into antagonistic cabals, what ought to be the commonwealth of letters, our plan may afford a common rallying point for Irishmen of all denominations, excluding none on account of their religious or

political opinions, because with these literature has nothing whatever to do, and we shall not suffer their intrusion into our journal. Thus, and thus only, can a fair exhibition be made of the vast mass of talent which this country supplies to the general stock, which needs but to be concentrated in order to be appreciated as it deserves.

We set out in this address with lively spirits, as one that commences a journey full of promise; perhaps we may be permitted to close it in a more serious strain, like the traveller round whom the shades of evening thicken, and his mind sinks slowly and sadly from the buoyant hopes and brilliant prospects of the morning, to a graver and more thoughtful mood, as he draws near his destination, uncertain of the reception he may meet with at his journey's end.

We are too well acquainted with the perplexities, the embarrassments and doubts which necessarily attend every important human effort, however wisely planned and well intended, not to feel that in our present undertaking we must encounter difficulty, and hazard disappointment. In the sister-countries, literature has become a necessary of life, and though the market is crowded with competitors, yet those who can combine natively with a fair degree of merit, are sure to meet encouragement.

But here we fear a double task awaits us: we have, in some measure, to create the taste we seek to gratify, and it is only through the friendly and active co-operation of those who know how valuable such a taste is, to the well-being and happiness of society, and who are, therefore, anxious to bestow so great a boon on Ireland, that we can hope to succeed. The duty of him who writes for the public as a stated task, is often in itself irksome enough; in the solitude of his study, and sometimes in the sadness of his heart, he endeavours to draw from the stores of his reading and meditation that which shall enlighten and amuse the more busy and cheerful crowd upon whose encouragement his success depends, and his comfort lies only in the “still small voice” which whispers him he is labouring for good, and that there is a blessing on his labours. We assure our readers with all sincerity, that we have embarked in this literary undertaking, believing, nay knowing, that it might and will do great and permanent good, if it prove the means of diffusing that taste for polite letters, and the various pursuits of civilized and cultivated life, which raises and invigorates the understanding, while it mellows and improves the heart.

Should we succeed, as we have every reason to hope and to believe, our reward will be indeed great, in the consciousness of what we shall have accomplished; and should we, on the other hand, be ultimately doomed to bear with the regrets that wait on disappointment, we must seek for satisfaction in our own breasts, and in the consciousness of the integrity of our efforts and intentions.

[The spirit which breathes through the following letter, is in every way so gratifying to our feelings, and so kindly and delicately anticipates what we had wished to say, on the important subject of sterling contributions from the native talent of our country, that we have solicited and obtained permission from the fair and amiable writer, to publish it along with the delightful tale which it accompanied.]

To the Editor of the Dublin Literary Gazette.

DEAR SIR,

It gives me very sincere pleasure to proffer you my first contribution to the "Dublin Literary Gazette," and to offer you, as an Irishwoman, my very grateful thanks for having commenced an undertaking—the success or failure of which will make me either proud or ashamed of my country.

If Scotland can and does support two weekly Literary Journals, it would be melancholy indeed, if in Ireland one such publication, and that so spirited an one as is now about to issue from the press of Dublin, did not prosper.

My humble, but cheerful attempt, may, I hope, do good in one way—it may induce some of the many hundreds of our countrymen and countrywomen who are reaping gold and golden opinions on this side the channel, to use their pens in forwarding a work which must decide the yet undetermined point—whether in Ireland there is spirit, energy, and national feeling enough, to sustain a literary periodical.

Pray command my services in any way, and believe me,

Faithfully yours,

ANNA MARIA HALL.

59, Upper Charlotte-st. Fitzroy-square.
December, 1833.

KATE CONNOR,

{A TRUE RECORD}—BY MRS. S. C. HALL,

Author of "Sketches of Irish Character," &c.

"Trust me, your Lordship's opinion is unfounded," said the Lady Helen Graves; and as the noble girl uttered the words, her eye brightened and her cheek flushed with greater feeling than high-born fashionables generally deem necessary.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Earl, looking up at the animated features of his god-daughter, "and how comes my pretty Helen to know aught of the matter; methinks she has learned more than the mysteries of harp and lute, or the soft tones of the Italian and Spanish tongues: 'come,' he continued, 'sit down on this soft Ottoman, and prove the negative to my assertion—that the Irish act only from impulse, not from principle."

"How long can an impulse last," enquired the lady, who, like a good girl, did as she was bid, (which women by the way, seldom do, unless they have a point to carry), and seated herself at her god-father's feet, in the very spot he wished, playfully resting her rosy cheek on his hand, as she enquired—"tell me first how long an impulse can last!"

"It is only a momentary feeling, my love, although acting upon it may embitter a long life."

"But an impulse cannot last for a month, can it? Then I am quite safe, and now your Lordship must listen to a true tale, and must suffer me to tell it in my own way, *brogue* and all; and moreover, must have patience. It is about a peasant maiden, whom I dearly love—aye, and respect too, and whenever I think of sweet 'Kate Connor,' I bless God that the aristocracy of virtue, (if I dare use such a

phrase) may be found, in all its lustre, in an Irish cabin."

"It was on one of the most chill of all November days, the streets and houses filled with fog, and the few stragglers in the square, in their dark clothes, looking like dirty demons in a smoky pantomime, that papa and myself, at that *outré* season, when every body is out of town, arrived here from Brighton; he had been summoned on business, and I preferred accompanying him, to remaining on the coast alone. "Not at home to any one," were the orders issued, when we sat down to dinner. The cloth had been removed, and papa was occupying himself in looking over some papers; from his occasional frown I fancied they were not of the most agreeable nature; at last I went to my harp, and played one of the airs of my country, of which I knew he was particularly fond. He soon left his seat, and kissing my forehead with much tenderness, said—"that strain is too melancholy for me just now, Helen, for I have received no very pleasant news from my Irish agent." I expressed my sincere sorrow at the circumstance, and ventured to make some enquiries as to the intelligence that had arrived. "I cannot understand it," he said; "when we resided there, it was only from the papers that I heard of the 'dreadful murders'—'horrible outrages,' and 'malicious burnings.' All around us was peace and tranquillity; my rents were as punctually paid as in England; for in both countries a tenant, yes, and a good tenant too, may be sometimes in arrear. I made allowance for the national character of the people, and while I admired the contented and happy faces that smiled as joyously over potatoes and milk, as if the board had been covered with a feast of venison, I endeavoured to make them desire more, and then sought to attach them to me by supplying their new wants."

"And, dear sir, you succeeded," I said. "Never were hearts more grateful—never were tears more sincere, than when we left them to the care of that disagreeable, ill-looking agent."

"Hold, Lady Mal-a-pert," interrupted my father sternly; "I selected Mr. O'Brien: you can know nothing as to his qualifications. I believe him to be an upright, but I fear me, a stern man; and I apprehend he has been made the tool of a party."

"Dear papa, I wish you would again visit the old castle. A winter amongst my native mountains would afford me more pure gratification than the most successful season in London." My father smiled and shook his head. "The rents are now so difficult to collect, that I fear"—he paused, and then added abruptly, "it is very extraordinary, often as I mention it to O'Brien, that I can receive no information as to the Connors. You have written frequently to your poor nurse, and she must have received the letters—I sent them over with my own, and they have been acknowledged!" He had scarcely finished this sentence, when we heard the porter in loud remonstrance with a female who endeavoured to force her way through the hall. I half opened the library door, where we were sitting, to ascertain the cause of the interruption. "Ah then, sure, ye wouldn't have the heart to turn a poor craythur from the doore—that's come sich a way, jist to spake tin words to his lordship's glory. And don't tell me that my Lady Hilin wouldn't see me, and she to the fore."

It was enough; I knew the voice of my nurse's daughter—and would, I do think, have kissed her with all my heart, but she fell on her knees, and clasping my hand firmly, between hers—exclaimed, while the tears rolled down her cheeks, and sobs almost choked her utterance—"Holy Mary! Thank God!—'Tis herself sure!—though so beautiful!—and no ways proud!—and I will have justice!" And then in a subdued voice she added—"Praise to the Lord!—his care niver left me—and I could die content this minute—only for you, mother, dear!—yerself only—and— Our powdered knaves, I perceived, smiled and sneered—when they saw Kate Connor—seated that evening by my side—and my father (heaven bless him for it!) opposite to us in his great arm-chair, listening to the story that Kate had to unfold.

"Whin ye's left us, we all said that the winter was come in earnest, and that the summer was gone for ever. Well, my Lord, we struv to please the agint, why not?—sure he was the master ye set over us!—but it doesn't become the likes o' me, nor wouldn't be manners to turn my tongue agin him, and he made as good as a jintleman, to be sure, by yer lordship's notice—which the whole country knew he was not afore—either by birth or breeding. Well, my Lady—sure if ye put a sod o' turf—saving yer presence—in a goold dish, it's only a turf still—and he must ha' been ould nick's born child—(Lord save us!) whin yer honor's smile couldn't brighten him—and it's the truth I'm telling, and no lye—first of all, the allowance to my mother was stopped for damage the pig did to the new hedges—and thin we were forced to give our best fowl as a *compliment* to Mr. O'Brien—because the goat—(and the cra-thur without a tooth!) they said, skinned the trees—then the priest (yer Lordship *minds*, Father Lavery)—and the agint, quarrelled, and so—out o' spite—he set up a school—and would make all the childer go to larn there—and thin the priest hindered—and to be sure we *stud* by the church—and so there was nothin' but fighting—and the boys gave over work, seeing that the tip-tops didn't care how things went—only abusing each other. But it isn't that I should be bothering yer kind honors wid. My brother, near two years agone, picked up wid the hoith of bad company—God knows how—and got above us all—so grand-like—wearing a new coat, and a watch, and a jewel ring! so—whin he got the time o' day in his pocket, he wouldn't look at the same side of the way we wint—well, lady dear, this struck to my mother's heart—yet it was only the beginning of trouble—he was found in the dead o' night" (continued poor Kate, her voice trembling)—"but ye hard it all—'twas in the papers—and he was sint beyant seas. Och! many's the night we have spint crying to think of that shame! or on our bare bended knees—praying that God might turn his heart. Well, my lady, upon that, Mr. O'Brien made no more ado—but said we were a seditious family, and that he had yer lordship's warrant to turn us out—and that the cabin—the nate little cabin—ye gave to my mother was to go to the gauger."

"He did not dare to say that!" interrupted my father proudly—"he did not dare to use my name to a falsehood."

"The word—the very word I spoke"—exclaimed Kate—"Mother, says I, his lordship would niver take back, for the sin of the son,